

Optical Character Reader (OCR)

OCR (Optical Character Reader) is an input device used to read a printed text. OCR scans text optically character by character, converts them into a machine readable code and stores the text on the system memory.



OCR (optical character recognition) is the recognition of printed or written text characters by a computer. This involves photo scanning of the text character-by-character, analysis of the scanned-in image, and then translation of the character image into character codes, such as ASCII, commonly used in data processing.

In OCR processing, the scanned-in image or bitmap is analyzed for light and dark areas in order to identify each alphabetic letter or numeric digit. When a character is recognized, it is converted into an ASCII code. Special circuit boards and computer chips designed expressly for OCR are used to speed up the recognition process.

OCR is being used by libraries to digitize and preserve their holdings. OCR is also used to process checks and credit card slips and sort the mail. Billions of magazines and letters are sorted every day by OCR machines, considerably speeding up mail delivery.